

REMARKS

The Applicants have filed the present Preliminary Amendment concurrently with filing of a divisional application, which is a divisional of a co-pending U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/200,583 filed on November 27, 1998.

The Applicants have amended the specification in the divisional application as recited herein to add a cross reference to the co-pending parent application, i.e., U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/200,583 filed on November 27, 1998.

The Applicants have further cancelled the original Claims 1-27, of which Claims 1-6, 8-17, 26 and 27 have been allowed and Claim 7 has been cancelled in the prosecution of the parent application. It is noted that in the parent case the Examiner imposed a restriction requirement requiring the restriction of Claims 18-25 (now cancelled) and the Applicants reserved the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected subject matter (i.e., Claims 18-25). Instead of the originally restricted Claims 18-25, the Applicants submit the new Claims 28-33 presented herein, which are drawn to the subject matter of the cancelled Claims 18-25, for prosecution on the merits in this divisional application. The Applicants respectfully submit that the new claims do not introduce any new matter into the application.

The Applicants respectfully request early and favorable consideration of the present divisional application, as amended herein, on the merits. If a telephone conference with the Applicants' attorney would be advantageous, the Applicants respectfully request the Office to contact the undersigned at the following telephone number: (516) 742-4343.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Esatto, Jr.', written in a cursive style.

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